

Dear Members

The past month has been extremely busy with competitions coming thick and fast. With the green staff working tirelessly preparing the course for play each day. Whilst on occasions starting as early as 04:30 just so they can keep ahead of the days play.

Greens

Although the greens are still not where they should be they are moving in the right direction. We are still seeing signs of fresh activity from the leather jackets with fresh holes being seen on course set up each day. This does appear to be reducing and I am hopeful they will go into pupation soon and putting surfaces will continue to improve.

We have used bio stimulants with sugars to try and impact the leather jackets further. I have also recently sprayed 10kg of Nitrogen to encourage further growth and to help the turf recover to aid filling the voids left by the leather jacket larvae.



9TH Green April 2021



9th Green June 1st, 2021

As can be seen above there has been a considerable improvement in grass coverage over a 6-week period. I am fully aware that although there has been significant improvement the ball is still bobbling whilst putting. This will continue to improve but until we get full grass coverage back with all the voids filled there will always be some sort of movement unfortunately.

This week the greens have been verti-cut and topdressing sand applied using 8 tons of sand for all greens this should help regain some sort of surface smoothness over the coming weeks.



1st Green Top dressed

I would also like to thank G.C.M for the investment of a new Salsco Greens Roller. This machine will help surface smoothness and will come in to its own once we get back to full grass coverage.



Staff Training Salsco Greens Roller

G.C.M also invested in 2 second-hand Toro workman buggies. Currently we have two buggies for six staff which has proved to be a logistical nightmare when issuing jobs. These buggies will now give us many more options when carrying out works throughout the golf course.



Toro Workman Buggy

Bunkers

The temporary bunkers on the 6th hole have now been completed and are open for play. Our aim this winter is to have them revetted with the eco bunker materials matching them to the rest of the course. This was a short-term fix to get them open and back playable as quickly as possible after lockdown.



Bunker's 6th Fairway Before & After

Bunker Sand

Bunker sand arrived a few weeks ago. Unfortunately, the bunker sand had been contaminated and the quarry has taken it back. We have been assured the new sand will be with us shortly. Certain bunkers are very low on sand and as soon as it arrives, we will be out topping up bunkers.

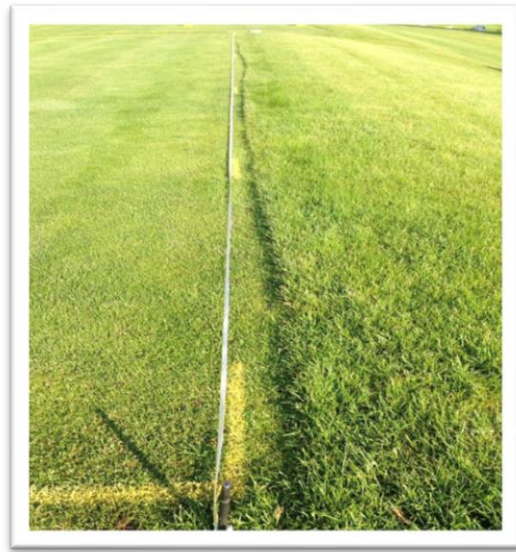
Tees

We have recently fertilized Tees and Approaches and they are also improving by the day from the damage over the winter months.

Many of you may have noticed around certain tees the grass seems to be growing long. This is my aim to create further definition round the teeing grounds. In the coming weeks we will be squaring off many tees and realigning to point as best possible down the target line. I aim to have a contrast of wild rough around the tee boxes with a fly mowed edge and then the teeing surface itself, this will improve the teeing grounds overall aesthetics. Members may see some painted lines out on the tees in the coming weeks this is for the greenkeepers to follow when mowing, starting to realign the tee boxes.



A well defined & aligned teeing ground



Marking teeing grounds to square alignment

Over the next couple of weeks we will be applying wetting agents on our greens, tees, fairways and approaches to aid us to uniformly manage moisture and maintain healthy turf through the height of the summer months.



1st Tee

Approaches

Recently we have double scarified our approaches to try and refine the coarse grasses as best we can. This is still work in progress and we will continue monthly through the playing season. This will give us an improved transition from fairway in to the green complex where putting or chip and run shots will be the preferred option. This is how links golf should be. We will carry out extensive works on the approaches at the end of the season and my aim for next season is to bring the approaches out behind green side bunkers etc showing off the course hollows and undulations further. We will also be moving to a half and half mowing pattern how most links golf courses present their approaches.



Freshly scarified and mown approach

Weeds

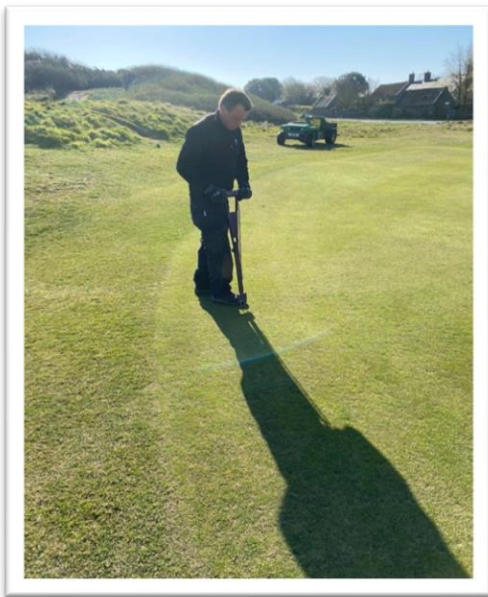
We have treated all the playing surfaces for Daisys, Buttercups, Clover and Plantains although this should have been carried out in mid to late April the drought conditions and constant winds have prevented us in doing so. Only in the last two weeks or so we have finally had conditions where leagally we are allowed to spray.

All tees will be sprayed separetly as this is a different calibration setting for our sprayer due to their small size and shape.

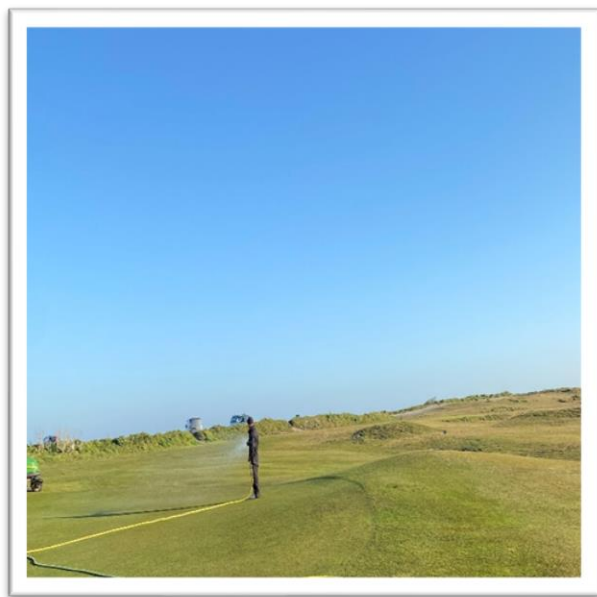
Irrigation

We have started to use the automatic irrigation system at its full capacity. We have experienced many leaks and electrical faults along the way rectifying these can be very time consuming. Im hoping the new irrigation system will get the goahead for this winter as faults are only going to get worse the further along we go.

As we move in to the summer months many have seen the greenkeepers out probing the greens and have asked what we are doing? The use of a Field Scout TDR 300 moisture meter is in use. This enables staff to pin point localized dry spots and apply water in these areas without having to use an irrigation cycle which will apply water to all areas of the green i.e. over applying water. This will save money and aid overall plant health with firmer higher performing putting surfaces. The Volumetric Water Content figures we strive to achieve are between 20% - 23% VWC. The moisture meter basically gives us a heads up before the grass starts wilting, whilst also telling us if there is too much moisture within the rootzone.



Moisture probing Greens



Dry spots identified hand watered

I hope this have given you a bit of an insight to what we have been up to this past month and of our plans in coming weeks. I really do hope the greens start to recover quickly now and we can give the memberships some good standard putting surfaces for the rest of the season.

Kind Regards
Ollie

